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ABSTRACT

Traditional Marxist approaches to the state relegate superstructural institutions like the school to a minor role in the process of social change. More recent theories like those of Gramsci, Althusser, and Poulantzas raise the state and the class struggle in the state apparatuses to a much more prominent position: superstructure, including the state, is crucial to the reproduction of labor power and the relations in production, and crises in the superstructure are a fundamental element in the process of change. Schooling, therefore, takes on a new importance in recent Marxist theories of society. The primary purpose of formal education is to reproduce the existing power relations--the domination of one group over others--from generation to generation without the use of violence. This is seen in recent analyses of education in France and the U.S. However, the overproduction of educated persons is creating disruptive potential for the workplace as well as for the educational system, resulting in a falling commodity value of education. Such inherent contradictions decrease the mediating potential of schools. (Author/JK)

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MARXIAN APPROACHES TO EDUCATION

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Abstract

Traditional Marxist approaches to the State relegate superstructural institutions like the school to a minor role in the process of social change. More recent theories like those of Gramsci, Althusser, and Poulantzas raise the State and the class struggle in the State apparauses to a much more prominent position: superstructure, including the State, is crucial to the reproduction of labor power and the relations in production, and crises in the superstructure are a fundamental element in the process of change. Schooling, therefore, takes on a new importance in new Marxist theories of society. But even these theories and the literature specifically about the educational system which emanates from them -- it is argued -- lack a coherent model of the dynamic of change; the paper provides a dialectical analysis of education in which contradiction not only occurs in the base, but in the superstructure as well. The function of superstructure is to mediate contradictions in the base. Yet, institutions like schools -- in the very mediation process -- generate contradictions which decrease their mediating potential.

I. Introduction

Traditional views of education and society emphasize the role that education plays in altering individual characteristics and the position of that individual in the economy, social structure, and polity. The focus of such views is on an institution (the school) and its relationship to individual youth. That does not mean that each pupil is treated as an individual case; to the contrary, individuals in their collectivity are immersed in a universal pool, and social and educational science attempts to find the universal norms and rules by which to understand the relation between institution and individual in that pool. We find that, at one and the same time, the individual is universal -- is subject to behavior patterns that cut across culture, occupation, social position -- and simultaneously is separate, each person responsible for himself or herself at his moment in history, separate from past history, past culture and past interactions.

There is conflict in such analysis. Being separate, individuals struggle one against the other. But these struggles are resolved by universally accepted rules and regulations -- universally accepted because they are fair and just: economic conflicts are resolved by the marketplace, particularly the price and wage system; social and political conflicts are resolved by the legal system, contained in the democratic State. And changes in these systems are arrived at by democratic consensus -- the vote. Education, also part of the State, is therefore an expression of the consensual social mood, also subject to conflict, but a conflict which is acted out in the context of democratic decision-making and individual choice as to how much and what kind of education and training to take.

The Marxian view of education and society differs. It is class-based and historical. Individual behavior is the product of historical forces, rooted in material conditions. As material conditions change, through class conflict, so do relationships between individuals in different social positions, positions determined by the social organization of production and each person's relation to production.

> ... In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material production forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of a society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which corresponds definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determined their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determined their consciousness. (Karl Marx, preface to the Critique of Political Economy.)

Thus, the organization of production -- the social formation -- and its historical development are central to the Marxian approach, for it is in this organization that we find the relations of human life, the meaning and value of individual characteristics, and the determinants of political power and social hierarchy. In capitalist production, capitalists (and more recently, managers) control and accumulate capital and are able, in the context of constant struggle with the working class, to shape society's development process, including its social mores and cultural formation. Both capitalist and worker consciousness are shaped by their relationship in production; it is this relationship itself which conditions individual social development and

life styles. The individual and institutions are therefore the historical product of the development of the social formation and the relations of production.

Conflict in this approach is <u>not</u> resolvable by universal rules because such rules are class-based; they serve particular interests -- the interests of the dominant class. So the market system and the State, far from being consensual, are the product of class domination and class struggle. The capitalist class -- through its political power -- is not only able to exploit the working class (those who only own their labor) but create a way of life which serves capitalist interests and leaves workers alienated and oppressed. The only resolution of the inherent conflict in this system of production is its replacement by another in which the working class has the political power to reorganize production and develop a different way of life.

This brings us to the problem of reproduction and its counterpart, social change. Since the Marxian approach considers capitalist society to be organized in the interest of capitalists and managers, how are the relations of the production, the division of labor, and social classes reproduced from generation to generation? In the present version of the "traditional" liberal view (pluralism), reproduction takes place through the selection of leaders who in some sense reflect the needs and wants of the electorate at least that part of the electorate which is even interested in participating in politics and social change. According to this view, the present structure of capitalist society and its political counterpart, representative democracy, is acceptable to the mass of citizens. Change takes place through competition

between elite groups who have different interpretations of how to achieve the greatest good within generally acceptable goals (Greenberg, 1977, pp. 36-42).

In the Marxian approach, this "consensus" about the structure of society is absent; yet, capitalism continues to be the prevailing mode of production. Orthodox Marxist theories argue that reproduction is carried out largely by capitalists in the production sector itself — by a series of tactics which keep labor fearful of any attempts to organize against employers and maintain a division of labor along class lines. These theories also argue that the capitalist State is the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie, keeping workers in their place through the juridical system and the army/police.

More recent Marxian analyses, however, give greater weight in the reproduction process to superstructure. This is where schooling comes in. For it is in schooling that reproduction takes its most organized form: children go to school at an early age and are systematically inculcated with skills, values, and ideology which fit into the type of economic development suited to continued capitalist control. It is argued that through the schools and other superstructural institutions the capitalist class reproduces the forces of production (labor, the division of labor, and the division of knowledge) and the relations of production — the latter predominantly by the maintenance and development of a "legitimate" ideology and set of behavior patterns (culture).

Reproduction in the interest of a particular social class automatically implies the existence of class antagonism and the potential

for class struggle. It is this notion of class struggle inherent in all aspects of capitalist development and capitalist institutions, structure and superstructure, that forms the basis of a Marxian theory of social change. Capitalists' need to organize institutions for reproduction means that there is resistance to capitalist's concept of development and their necessary control of that development. Again, a Marxian analysis of schooling in the context of social change is couched in this overall class struggle.

II. The Role of the State and Education

The general configurations of a Marxian approach to social change now have to be translated into Marxian analysis of the educational system. This poses certain difficulties, since Marx himself dealt in a very limited way with public education. While it is worth going through what he and then Lenin said about schooling, to develop our analysis properly we have to turn to more recent Marxist writers. In particular, we will situate the analysis in the context of the discussion on theories of the State, a discussion which has been central to new developments in Marxian thought.

It is not only that the most interesting debate today among Marxists revolves around the role of the State: for practical reasons, any study of the educational system cannot be separated from some explicit or implicit analysis of the purpose and functioning of the government sector. Since power is expressed at least in part through a society's political system, any attempt to develop a model of educational change should have behind it a carefully thought out theory of the functioning of government — what we shall refer to as a "theory of the State." Yet, even if we didn't believe that an educational system has something to do with power in a society, we would still be compelled to discuss government in understanding formal education: in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries education has been increasingly and primarily a function of the State.

Marx, Lenin and the State

In keeping with Marx's view of superstructure discussed above, Marxian formulations of the capitalist State reject the idea of State power as ideally directed to the common good, the general interest, or to equal justice for all, even in Western-style capitalist democracies. Marx argued that the State is an apparatus for the exercise of power not in the general interest but in the interest of a particular group -- the "ruling class." And while he recognized that this State could be separated at moments in history from the direct control of the bourgeoisie (see for example The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte), the general Marxian concept of the State conforms to a historically determined society where the State acts as a committee of the dominant class, a committee whose particular function is to organize and concentrate repressive power in order to maintain that dominant class's control over production.

We can summarize the fundamentals of Marx's (and Engel's) theory of the State as follows:

First, as we have shown, Marx viewed the material conditions of a society as the basis of its social structure and of human consciousness. The form of the State, therefore, emerges from the relations of production, not from the general development of the human mind, nor from the collective of men's wills. The capitalist State is the political expression of the class structure inherent in production. Since the bourgeoisie -- in capitalist production -- has a particular control over labor in the production process, it also extends this power relation to the State and to other social institutions.

Secondly, Marx (unlike Hegel) argued that the State, emerging from the relations in production, does not represent the common good, but is the political expression of the dominant class. The capitalist State is a response to the necessity of mediating class conflict and maintaining "order," an order which reproduces the bourgeoisie's economic dominance (The 18th Brumaire). Engels developed this concept further when he contended that the State has its origins in the need to control social struggles between different economic interests, and that this control is carried out by the economically most powerful class in the society.

> But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, shall not consume themselves and society in a fruitless struggle, a power, apparently standing above society, has become necessary to moderate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of "order;" and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself above it and increasing alienating itself from it, is the state...(Engels, 1968, p. 155)
> ...As the state arose from the need to keep class antagonisms in check, but also arose in the thick of the fight between the classes, it is normally the state of the most powerful, economically ruling class, which by its means becomes also the politically ruling class, and so acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. (Engels, 1968, pp. 156-57).

Thirdly, both Marx and Engels emphasized the State as a repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie: an apparatus to legitimize power, to repress, to enforce the reproduction of the class structure and class relations. Even the juridical system is an instrument of repression and control since it sets the rules of behavior and enforces them in line with bourgeois values and norms.

It was on this basis that Lenin developed a much more detailed analysis of the bourgeois State (State and Revolution). His view -- written in 1917 in the context of the Russian Revolution -- was that the

State is an organ of class rule and that while the State attempts to reconcile class conflict (in Engels' words, "...a power seemingly standing above society became necessary for the purpose of moderating the conflict..." that conflict is irreconcilable. Although bourgeois democracy seems to allow participation and even control of political (and economic) institutions by the working class if they choose to exercise that political power, and thus seems to produce a State apparatus which is the result of class reconciliation, Lenin argued that since the State is the repressive apparatus of a dominant class, the necessity for it does not exist unless there is class conflict (Lenin, 1965, pp 8-9). Thus, the destruction of the bourgeois State is essential to any revolutionary change, and this destruction has to take place through armed confrontation, since the State is the armed force of the bourgeoisie. The key here is that the State in capitalist societies, for all its "deomcratic" institutions, is controlled directly by the bourgeois class, and that its primary function is coercion. By meeting this coercive force head on and defeating it by superior arms, the bourgeois State will be destroyed, the instrument of oppression will be removed, and the proletariat will take power, utilizing its own force of arms to protect that power.

Given this analysis of the State, it is not surprising that public schooling should not have had an important function in Marx's or Lenin's analysis of capitalism (see Sarti, 1979; Lenhardt, 1979). Both certainly understood the class nature of capitalist schooling at all levels of the educational system. As Marx wrote in his Critique of the Gotha Program:

> What idea lies behind these words? Is it believed that in present day society (and it is only with this that one has to deal) education can be equal for all the classes? Or is it demanded that the upper classes also be compulsorily reduced to the modicum of education -- the elementary school -- that alone is compatible with the economic conditions not only of the wage workers but of the peasants as well?.....If in some states of the latter country (the United States) higher educational institutions are also "free," that only means in fact defraying the cost of the education of the upper classes from the general tax receipts....it is the State that needs to receive a severe education from the people." (Marx, 1972, p. 30).

Furthermore, he argued (in that same Critique) that "an early combination of productive labor with education (as) one of the most potent means for the transformation of present-day society." (Marx, 1972, p. 32). Yet, in the first volume of Capital, written seven years earlier, he considers public education as a concession to the working class, opposed by capital owners on the grounds that education interfered with children's work. There are clear indications in Capital that Marx viewed public education as a working class victory, inconsistent with capitalists' attempts to reduce manual labor to its lowest, least intelligent level (see Marx, 1906, pp. 397-400; pp. 436-437).

Lenin did not agree. He provided a much more complex analysis of bourgeois education and its implications for the transition to socialism. First, he recognized the relation between bourgeois education and the political apparatus, and in that sense, education's ideological function in a State which he considered as primarily "society's organized and concentrated violence." At one level, then, he did not put much weight on the role of schooling in maintaining capitalist relations of production (in contrast to repression), but at another, he saw that one of

the greatest obstacles to socialist education was the strong connection between the inherited educational system and the former bourgeois political apparatus (Lenin, 1978, p. 161). He also considered formal education as important in combatting bourgeois culture and enlightening the masses (p. 162).

> The bourgeoisie themselves...made their own bourgeois politics the cornerstone of the school system, and tried to reduce schooling to the training of docile and efficient servants of the bourgeoisie... They never gave a thought to making the school a means of developing the human personality. And now it is clear to all that this can be done only by socialist schools, which have inseparable bonds with all the working and exploited people and wholeheartedly support Soviet policy (Lenin, 1978, p. 109).

While Lenin saw that Capitalist knowledge and particularly the way that knowledge was presented in schools was also intimately tied to capitalist relations of production, he insisted that socialism had to be built through capitalist knowledge (1978, pp. 142-144): "Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the store of knowledge mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist, landowner, and bureaucratic society" (p. 142). In some sense, then, he accepted that some part of capitalist education is separate from capitalist relations of production; that knowledge (technology) is culturally objective and previous knowldege can be utilized unaltered in building socialism. His post-revolutionary speeches can therefore be interpreted as advocating a separation between "political" education very different from its bourgeois counterpart, the replacement of the rote system of learning, the joining of book learning with practical work, but the preservation of the fundamental elements of knowledge presented in the bourgeois schools.

Gramsci and the State

Given Lenin's and then Stalin's influence over Marxian theory in the nineteen twenties and thirties, it is remarkable that Gramsci was able to provide a powerful reinterpretation and expansion of Marx which differed so greatly from Leninist and Stalinist thought. Gramsci developed Marx's concept of superstructure and elevated it to an important position in understanding how societies function. That development, in turn, also gave the State and public education a new importance, both in describing the capitalist social system and in formulating strategies for alternatives to capitalism.

Gramsci took Marx and Engels' concept of "hegemony" in civil society (as expressed in The German Ideology, 1970, pp. 64-65) and made it a central theme of his own version of the functioning of the capitalist system. Quite similar to Marx's and Engels' notion, this hegemony, in Gramscian terms, meant the ideological predominance of bourgeois values and norms over the subordinate classes. While for both Marx and Gramsci, the nature of civil society is the key to understanding capitalist development, in Marx's definition, civil society is structure (relations in production), and for Gramsci, civil society is superstructure, which represents the active and positive factor in historical development; it is the complex of ideological and cultural relations, the spiritual and intellectual life, and the political expression of those relations. It is these rather than the structure which becomes the focus of the Gramscian analysis.

In elevating hegemony to a predominant place in the science of politics, he emphasized much more than earlier writers the role of

superstructure in perpetuating classes and preventing the development of class consciousness. And he assigned to the State part of this function of promoting a single (bourgeois) concept of reality, and, therefore, gave the State a more extensive (enlarged) role in perpetuating the class structure. Much more than Lenin, Gramsci saw the mass of workers as being able to develop class consciousness themselves, but he also saw the obstacles to consciousness as more formidable in Western societies than Lenin had imagined. It was not merely lack of understanding of their position in the economic process that kept workers from comprehending their class role, nor was it only the "private" institutions of society, such as religion, which were responsible for keeping the working class from self-realization, but it was the State itself that was involved in reproducing the relations of production. In other words, the State was much more than the coercive apparatus of the bourgeoisie; it included the superstructural hegemony of the bourgeoisie.

The importance of the State as an apparatus of hegemony for Gramsci is therefore still rooted in the class structure, a class structure defined by and tied to the relations in production. This is key to understanding Gramsci: he provides an analysis of historical development which rejects the narrower Marxist version of civil society as incomplete and not relevant to the Western (Italian) situation. But at the same time, he does not deny that the superstructure -- hegemony and its extension into and through the State apparatus — is intimately connected to relations in production: "...for though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function

exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity" (Gramsci, 1970, p. 161). It is not the separation of superstructure from structure which Gramsci stresses, but rather the dialectical relation between them (see the exchange between Norberto Bobbio and Jacques Texier in Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea, 1969, and in Bobbio, 1977, also reprinted in Mouffe, 1979, for a further discussion of this point). Hegemony and the hegemonic function of the State emanates from both the nature of the bourgeoisie as an ideologically all-encompassing class and its particular position of economic power in capitalist society. It is Gramsci's treatment of hegemony which explains the development (or lack of development) of working class consciousness, so important to any Marxist political analysis.

Gramsci raises man's thought (consciousness) to a newly prominent place in the "philosophy of praxis" (as he calls Marxism). Control of consciousness is as much or more an area of political struggle as control of the forces of production: "Furthermore, another proposition of the philosophy of praxis is also forgotten: that 'popular beliefs' and similar ideas are themselves material forces" (Gramsci, PN. p. 165). The State, therefore, as an instrument of bourgeois domination (as part of the civil society) must be involved in the struggle over consciousness, must be an intimate participant in that struggle. Bourgeois development is not only carried out through the development of the forces of production but through hegemony in the arena of consciousness. The State is involved in this extension, not only in the coercive enforcement of bourgeois economic power. Without the power (control) in the arena of

struggle over consciousness (and only then), Gramsci argues, the bourbeoisie will try to fall back on the coercive power of the State as its primary instrument of domination. Otherwise, coercive forces remain in the background, acting as a system of enforcement and threat but not overt coercion.

If the arena of consciousness for Gramsci is the primary struggle between the dominant and subordinate classes, then how do things change? How do the subordinate classes overcome the hegemony of the dominant classes? There are three parts to the answer Gramsci gives to these questions: First, the concept of "crisis of hegemony," derived in part from Marx's analysis of the 18th Brumaire; second, the concept of the "war of position;" and third, the role of the intellectuals.

Briefly, Gramsci contends (as did Engels and Marx before him) that there are periods of history in which social classes become detached from their political parties; that is, the class no longer recognizes the men who lead the parties as its expression. When this happens, the situation becomes dangerous, because violent solutions can occur, and the traditional means of using the State to maintain dominant class hegemony deteriorates. In this moment, those elements of the society--bureaucracy, Church, high finance, and other institutions which are less subject to the pressures of public opinion (according to Gramsci) increase their power and autonomy. How do these crises occur? They are the result of unpopular actions of the ruling classes (through the State), or the increased political activism by previously passive masses. In either case they add up to a "crisis of authority." This is what Gramsci

the "crisis of hegemony, or general crisis of the State" (PN, p. 210).

The "war of position" is based on the idea of surrounding the State apparatus with a counter-hegemony, a hegemony created by mass organization of the working class and by developing working class institutions and culture. "A social group can, and indeed must, already exercise leadership (i.e., be hegemonic) before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditons for the winning of such power" (PN, p. 207)). The basis of Gramsci's strategy, then, was not to organize workers and peasants in order to wage a frontal attack on the State, but to establish working class organizations as the foundations of a new culture--the norms and values of a new, proletarian society. This proletarian hegemony would confront bourgeois hegemony in a war of position--of trenches moving back and forth in an ideological struggle over the consciousness of the working class--until the new superstructure had surrounded the old, including the State apparatus. Only at that time would it make sense to take over State power, since only then would the working class in fact control social values and norms to the point of being able to build a new society using the State apparatus.

Gramsci and Education

This brings us to Gramsci's analysis of intellectuals, an analysis that has direct bearing on his conception of education and the role that education plays both in hegemony and counter-hegemony. Gramsci defined two types of intellectuals: "traditional" professional intellectuals whose position in the "interstices" of society has a certain trans-class aura about it; and

"organic" intellectuals--any person who is possessor of a particular technical capacity, and the thinking and organizing elements of every social class. Traditional intellectuals function to build the hegemony of the dominant class. Most of these are "organic" to the dominant class; that is, they come from the dominant class and help in "directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong," (PN, p. 3). The dominant classes also reach into the subordinate for additional traditional intellectuals to give homogeneity and legitimacy to the dominant group--to create an ideology which transcends classes. These working class traditional intellectuals cease to be organically linked to their class of origin: they, along with their dominant class organic counterparts, are for Gramsci agents of the bourgeoisie (PN, p. 12).

It was from this position on intellectuals in the context of hegemony, that we can understand Gramsci's position on public education. For Gramsci, the role of the traditional bourgeois educational system is to develop "organic" intellectuals from the bourgeois classes and to reach into the subordinate classes for additional intellectuals to give homogeneity and self-awareness to the dominant group. As we noted above, the traditional intellectuals who come from the subordinate groups, while they are not distinguished professionally from their organic counterparts, are--for Gramsci--different: they cease to be organically linked to their class of origin. But Gramsci also recognized that for most of the subordinate class, the schooling they receive is different than that for the children of the bourgeoisie. The school system is class-divided despite the impression it gives of producing

upward mobility--of being democratic.

What then is the role of formal schooling (if any) in Gramsci's strategy of the "war of position?" Gramsci recognized that State schooling was class structured, part of the ideological apparatus of the bourgeois State and a contributor to bourgeois hegemony. He recognized that the educational system produces intellectuals which give the bourgeoisie "homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields" (PN, p. 5). These intellectuals play an important role as "the dominant group's deputies exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government" (PN, p. 12). Some of these intellectuals come from subordinate groups; for Gramsci, they cease to be organically linked to their class of origin.

Yet, there are those working class intellectuals (like Gramsci) who do remain organically linked to the working class. It is up to the revolutionary party to weld together disaffected bourgeois professional (traditional) intellectuals, professional intellectuals from the proletariat, and organic proletarian intellectuals, the thinker-organizers with a conscious conception of the world which transcends their class interests. The first two categories of thinkers are definitely formed in the schools, even though their consciousness is raised outside the schools, in political activity directed by the revolutionary party. The third category, most crucial for Gramsci (since it is the organic non-professional intellectuals who give permanence and mass participation to the revolutionary party), would be formed outside the State school system. For Gramsci, as for Lenin, it would be the Party which is fundamental for developing proletarian consciousness.

But unlike Lenin, Gramsci could not accept State schools as having little relevance to bourgeois domination: he saw clearly--as we have discussed--that the type of knowledge taught and teacher/pupil relations in the school are crucial to intellectual formation and hence to the maintenance of bourgeois hegemony. Schools therefore not only favor the children of the bourgeoisie, they are <u>important</u> to the maintenance of class-based power relations. The schools, therefore, cannot be a source of developing proletarian hegemony; they can provide knowledge of a certain intellectual <u>motive</u>, but this knowledge can only be used for the proletariat by being <u>transformed</u> through a process of establishing proletarian hegemony. Gramsci also argued that once proletarian hegemony was established, the schools, as part of the bourgeois State apparatus, would have to be different, and he outlined the essentials of those differences--socialist education for Gramsci had to be part and parcel of a socialist culture, norms and values and relations that broke with the existing bourgeois values. Since the bourgeois schools were essential to a domination of one class over others, proletarian schools would have to reflect a participative, mass-base society, where teachers who promoted these values and knowledge served the proletariat.

Nevertheless, this transformation takes place <u>after</u> the establishment of proletarian hegemony. Just as Gramsci sees the bourgeois State as surrounded by proletarian hegemony, so he implicitly envisages the schools <u>surrounded</u> by an educational process directed through the revolutionary party. We will show below how two French sociologists, Baudelot and Establet, argue that in addition to schooling ideology French working class

pupils are subject to counter-ideological apparatuses (the working-class parties and unions). These are the bases of proletarian hegemony--they surround the bourgeois ideological apparatus with a counter-ideology. At the same time, the existence of a counter-ideology emerges from and contributes to a crisis of bourgeois hegemony. The counter-ideology, in a Gramscian analysis, develops resistance to the ideology inculcated in State schools, and this interferes with the maintenance of the dominant hegemony--resistance becomes part of the crisis in domination.

The key to a Gramscian educational strategy, then, is the creation of counter-hegemony outside the State schools, and the use of this counter-hegemony to develop organic intellectuals, to mobilize disillusioned bourgeois intellectuals and those traditional working class intellectuals who have become separated from their class origins, and to contribute to resistance by working class youth to the use of schools as centers of maintaining and extending bourgeois dominance.

Althusser: Ideology and the State

Louis Althusser has had an important influence on French philosophy and on Marxist educational analysis both in France (Baudelot and Establet) and the United States (Bowles and Gintis). In his major essay on the State and education (Althusser, 1971), he carries forward the Gramscian idea of accenting the superstructural and cultural aspects of class domination more than its economic aspects. Relative to Marx and Lenin, then, Althusser moves reproduction from the base to the superstructure. His essay, therefore, emphasizes the capitalist State as both the bourgeoisie's repressive and as its ideological apparatus, the latter intimately

related to the educational system. His view can be summarized in four main points:

1) Every social formation (such as capitalism) must reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces, and in order to be able to produce, that is, for feudalism or capitalism or socialism to function as such, it must reproduce the productive forces--the land, labor, capital, and knowledge that enter into production and the existing relations of production which are inherent in that production system--the hierarchy of power and control among landowners and serfs (feudalism), capitalists and labor (capitalism), directors or party officials and workers (socialism).

These productive forces, Althusser points out, are not reproduced at the level of firm but at the level of class: for example in capitalism, the capitalist class, as a class, reproduces labor power by paying workers wages with which they can feed themselves and raise the next generation of workers. The level of wages paid is determined by class struggle over the length of the working day and the hourly wage. But workers have to be reproduced as more than just homogeneous workers. They have to be "diversely skilled and therefore reproduced as such" (p. 131). This diversity is defined by the sociotechnical division of labor--its different jobs and positions.

2) How is the reproduction of the division of labor and skills carried out under capitalism? Here Althusser discusses a point left obscure by Marx and Engels, who treated labor as "homogeneous" (undifferentiated) except in terms of Engels' conception of an "aristocracy" of the working class, paid off by capitalists to divide workers against

themselves. Althusser argues that unlike social formations characterized by slavery or serfdom, this reproduction of the skills of labor power tends

> decreasingly to be provided for 'on the spot' (apprenticeship within production itself), but is achieved more and more outside production: by the capitalist education system, and by other instances and institutions (p. 132).

Reproduction here is not the same issue as Gramsci (and also Althusser, below) raise about the function of education (schooling) in reproducing the relations of production (the norms, values, and conception of society). In this instance, Althusser brings education into another aspect of the picture: the development of particular production skills for particular people. As we shall discuss in more detail below, this "know-how" is divided into different categories for different students-workers-to-be; furthermore, the schools also teach different children different rules of behavior depending on the type of job that they are likely to hold. Thus,

> The reproduction of labor power reveals as its sina quo non not only the reproduction of its 'skills' but also the reproduction of its subjection to the ruling ideology or of the 'practice' of that ideology, with the provision that it is not enough to say 'not only but also' for it is clear that it is in the forms of ideological subjection that provision is made for the reproduction of the skills of labor power (p. 133).

3) Now, what about the reproduction of the relations in production? How is this reproduction secured? Althusser answers: "I can say: for the most part, it is secured by the legal-political and ideological superstructure." Furthermore, he argues that (again) for the most part, it is secured by the exercise of State power in the State Apparatuses,

on the one hand the (Repressive) State Apparatus, on the other the Ideological State Apparatus" (p. 148). "For the most part" because the existing relations of production are first reproduced by the reward and punishment system of production itself—by the materiality of the processes of production.

Althusser's conception of reproducing the relations of production is almost identical to that of Gramsci's hegemony, except that for Althusser the State has a much more important role in reproduction than for Gramsci ("for the most part" vs. the "first line of trenches"). For Althusser, the State attains an overwhelming important position relative to the effects on reproduction of the production system itself and its related "private" institutions, both the reproduction of labor power (not discussed by Gramsci) and in reproducing the relations of production. And the most important single institution in the State used to carry out these two types of reproduction is the school:

> 1)..."this reproduction of the skills of labor power... is achieved more and more outside production: by the capitalist educational system..."; (p. 132) and 2) "I believe that the ideological State apparatus which has been installed in the dominant position in mature capitalist formations as a result of a violent political and ideological class struggle against the old dominant ideological State apparatus, is the educational ideological apparatus" (p. 152).

Like Gramsic, Althusser roots superstructure in structure. The superstructure is determined "in the last instance" by the base:

> ...the upper floors (the superstructure) could not 'stay up' (in the air) alone, if they did not rest precisely on their base (p. 135).

He goes on to say that the determination of the superstructure by the base "in the last instance" is thought of by the Marxist tradition in

two ways: 1) that there is relative autonomy of the superstructure with respect to the base; 2) there is reciprocal action of the superstructure on the base--changes in the superstructure affect the base as well as the more traditional concept that changes in the base affect the superstructure.

4) The State, then, is rooted in the base. It is--Althusser's view--also the 'machine' of repression, which "enables the ruling classes to ensure their domination over the working class, this enabling the former to subject the latter to the process of surplus-value extortion..." (p. 137). He therefore returns initially to the original Marxist conception of the State as the "essential point:"

> The State apparatus, which defines the State as a force of repressive execution and intervention 'in the interests of the ruling classes' in the class struggle conducted by the bourgeoisie and its allies against the proletariat, is quite certainly the State, and quite certainly defines its basic 'function' (p. 137).

Althusser thus considers the educational system as fundamental to both the reproduction of labor power and the reproduction of the relations of production in the capitalist social formation. It is the school, he argues, that reproduces the diversified skills required of the modern labor force. "What do children learn at school?" he asks (Althusser, 1971, p. 132). Two things, he answers: For one, they learn techniques--how to read, write, add, elements which may be rudimentary or thoroughgoing depending on the child's social class, but which are all useful in the different jobs in production. But besides these techniques and knowledge, children at school also learn the rules of good behavior:

> ...the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labor, according to the job he is 'destined' for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labor and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination (p. 132).

Thus, Althusser argues that the school provides for the capitalist social formation the two most important elements for the reproduction of its labor power: the reproduction of its skills, and the reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order, i.e., "a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class 'in words,'" (pp.132-133).

In addition to the reproduction of labor power, however, the schools also contribute to the reproduction of the relations in production. It is the Ideological State Apparatus which "certainly has the dominant role" in this reproduction (p. 155):

> ...it is by an apprenticeship in a variety of know-how wrapped up in the massive inculcation of the ideology of the ruling class that the relations of production in a capitalist social formation, i.e., the relations of exploited to exploiters and exploiters to exploited, are largely reproduced. The mechanisms which produce this vital result for the capitalist regime are naturally covered up and concealed by a universally reigning ideology of the School, universally reigning because it is one of the essential forms of the ruling bourgeois ideology: an ideology which represents the School as a neutral environment purged of ideology (because it is...lay), where teachers respectful of the 'conscience' and 'freedom' of the children who are entrusted to them (in complete confidence) by their 'parents' (who are free, too, i.e., the owners of their children) open up for them the path to freedom, morality and responsibility of adults by their own example, by knowledge, literature and their 'liberating' virtues (pp. 155-157).

Nicos Poulantzas: The Organic Relationship Between State and Base

Somewhat unique among the authors we have surveyed so far, Poulantzas makes his central focus the State rather than Marxist theory as a whole. Yet, since he comes from the Gramscian tradition of elevating the superstructure to a prominent place in understanding social structure and change, his studies of the State encompass most of the crucial elements in a theory of society (Poulantzas, 1973, 1975, 1976, and 1978).

He begins with two important formulations:

1) The role of the State apparatuses, he argues is "to maintain the unity and cohesion of a social formation by concentrating and sanctioning class domination, and in this way reproducing social relations, i.e., class relations" (1975, pp. 24-25). Political and ideological relations are materialized and embodied, as material practices, in these apparatuses. Furthermore, social classes are defined by their relationship to the economic apparatuses--the place of production and the State apparatuses. So social classes and the class struggle are part of the economic and political relations in a society: "The apparatuses are never anything other than the materialization and condensation of class relations" (1975, p. 25). He separates this concept from the institutionalist-functionalist analysis which has class relations arising from the situation of agents in institutional relationships. Weber, for example, had class relations emerging from relations of power in hierarchical institutions. But Poulantzas contends that State apparatuses do not have "power" of their own--institutions have not "power" as such, nor is power inherent in hierarchical relations.

Rather, the State "materializes and concentrates class relations, relations which are precisely what is embraced by the concept 'power.' The State is not an 'entity' with an intrinsic instrumental essence, but is itself a relation, more precisely the condensation of a class relation" (1975, p. 26). It is therefore not hierarchy that creates classes, but social classes that produce the particular configuration of power in the State apparatus. At the same time, the State apparatus is inherently marked by the class struggle--class struggle and the State apparatus cannot be separated.

2) The second formulation defines the relationship of the State to the dominant class. Since the State apparatuses are the "materialization and condensation of class relations," they attempt, in some form, to represent the interests of the dominant class. Poulantzas describes this representation in two stages of capitalism: one is the competitive stage, and the other, the more recent monopoly capitalism. In both stages, the State is "separated" from the economic structure, giving it the appearance of having relative autonomy from the dominant class. This separation is carried out, according to Poulantzas, as part of the relative separation of the politic from the economic that is specific to capitalism. It derives from the "separation and dispossession of the direct producers from their means of production that characterizes capitalism" (1975, p. 98). He argues that historically, capitalist ideology has promoted the concept of democracy in the political sphere as a sufficient condition for a mass democratic society. One person - one vote has shifted attention away from the class struggles inherent in capitalist production; political "democracy" has displaced the struggle

from the economic sphere to the voting booth. In the political arena--including the juridical apparatus--all members of society are equal. Rich and poor, old and young, (ultimately) women and men, all have the same power (one vote) to change or maintain the social situation. The inequality of economic relations is thus downgraded in capitalist society in favor of equality in political life. This diffuses conflict in economic matters, because it diverts such conflict into the political arena, into a contest over power in the State apparatus (1973). In Poulantzas' view, the State, under these ideological conditions, has to "appear" autonomous and neutral while at the same time keeping the dominated classes fractionalized and represent the interest of the dominant classes' power bloc. Relative autonomy is "simply" the necessary condition for the role of the capitalist state in class representation and in the political organization of hegemony. But with the displacement of class struggle from the economic to the political arena, the State itself becomes subject to the struggle--it becomes, in Poulantzas' words, "the condensation of a balance of forces:"

> The correspondence between the state on one hand, which ensures the social formation's cohesion by keeping the struggles that develop within the limits of the mode of production and by reproducing the social relations, and the interests of the hegemonic class or fraction on the other hand, is not established by means of a simple identification or reduction of the state to this fraction. The state is not an instrumental entity existing for itself, it is not a thing, but the condensation of a balance of forces. The correspondence in question is established rather in terms of organization and representation: the hegemonic class or fraction, beyond its immediate economic interests which are of the moment or at least short-term, must undertake to defend the overall political interest of the classes and fractions that constitute the power bloc, and thus its own long-term political interest. It must unite itself and the power

> bloc under its leadership. In Gramsci's profound intuition, it is the capitalist state with all its apparatuses, and not just the bourgeois political parties, that assumes an analogous role, with respect to the power bloc, to that of the working class party with respect to the popular alliance, the 'people' (1975, p. 98).

In monopoly capitalism, the State takes on economic functions that it did not have in the competitive stage. Poulantzas argues that the State has a general economic function even in the competitive stage, but this consists of reproducing the general conditions of the production of surplus value: taxation, factory legislation, customs duties, and the construction of economic infrastructure such as railways, all constitute the liberal State's intervention in the economy within the context of the class struggle. In monopoly capitalism, however, the relation of separation between economic and political which we described above is modified: the difference between power (1978, p. 49). Thus the apparatuses of the State are not simple appendices of power--the State is "organically present in the production of class power" (1978, p. 50); it is therefore fundamental to the conditions under which the bourgeoisie can accumulate and control capital, displacing struggle and conflict to the political from the economic sphere.

Briefly, Poulantzas sees the capitalist State differently from Gramsci in two fundamental ways: First, the State has economic functions (production) as well as ideological-repressive ones (reproduction). The State therefore enters directly into the economy as part of its attempt to resolve contradictions in production. Secondly, the State, in all its functions (ideological, repressive, and economic) is marked by contradiction because class struggle takes place <u>in the heart of the State</u> even as it tries to maintain an external dominant class hegemony.

He insists that the State is neither an instrumentalist depository (object) of dominant class power, nor a subject which possesses an abstract power of its own outside the class structure. It is rather a place for the dominant class to strategically organize itself in its relation to the dominated classes. It is a place and center of the exercise of power but it does not possess its own power. Furthermore, according to Poulantzas, under monopoly capitalism the ideological and repressive functions of the State are less important than under commercial capitalism. "The ensemble of State operations are presently organized in accord with its economic role" (1978, p. 186).

It is this last point which separates Poulantzas from Althusser. The State not only reproduces labor power and the relations of production through ideology and repression, it intervenes directly in the crises of production by investing in private production (defense industry in the United States, for example) and by producing itself, rescuing sectors of industry which have become unprofitable but are crucial employers and domestic suppliers of particular goods. This makes even the class struggle in production transcend the State apparatuses, since the State is a producer._/

Given this analysis, how does Poulantzas characterize the role of schooling in a capitalist society?

1) Captialist production, Poulantzas points out, is marked by a social division of labor which separates intellectual work from manual

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_/ A detailed analysis of labor-management conflicts in the State can be found in O'Connor, 1974.

work, by a separation of technology from the process of work itself, by the use of science and technology to rationalize power, and by an organic relation between this separated intellectual work and political domination--a relation between knowledge and power. The State incorporates this division into all its apparatuses. "It is in the capitalist State that the organic relations between intellectual work and political domination, between knowledge and power, are achieved in the highest form" (1978, p. 61). This State is the corollary and the product of this division, also playing its own role in the division's constitution and reproduction.

The State takes knowledge and participates in its transformation into language and rituals which serve to separate knowledge from mass consumption and from manual work--from the process of direct production. This legitimizes a particular ideology--the dominant bourgeois values and norms--by changing that juridic-political ideology into a set of technocratic "facts" and decisions based on "scientific" studies, on "expertise," etc. But, Poulantzas argues, the knowledge-power relation is not only an ideological legitimization: the capitalist separation of intellectual from manual work also concerns science itself. The State incorporates science into its mechanisms of power--intellectual "experts" as a body of specialists and professionals are controlled-through their financial dependence on the modern State apparatuses. They have largely become functionaries, in one form or another, of the State. For example, in the United States, a very high percentage of all professionals (about twenty-five to thirty percent) are directly employed by Federal, state, or local government (many in education), while another important percentage

depend indirectly on State expenditures for their livelihood (defense contracts, research contracts in private universities). Research is heavily influenced by such government contracts, and they also have an effect on new technology.

2) Education, for Poulantzas, is of course part of the State apparatuses; as we have seen, he analyzes these apparatuses in terms of their relation to the class structure--to the social formation in a particular place and period of time. Therefore, to understand the role of education in capitalist society, it is necessary to understand the social formation of such a society...And since this formation changes from competitive to monopoly capitalism to the present stage of "advanced" monopoly capitalism, the role of education must also change. Poulantzas is the first of the authors analyzed here who discusses education in the context, not only of class struggle, but of a class struggle whose nature changes as a result of previous struggle. The social formation changes in response to conflict, which changes the nature of conflict itself.

3) Poulantzas insists--in contrast to the institutionalist-functionalists and in accord with Althusser--that the ideological apparatuses neither create ideology, nor are they even the sole or primary factors in reproducing relations of ideological domination and subordination. Ideological apparatuses, he argues, only serve to fashion and inculcate the dominant ideology. And, "just as the ideological State apparatuses do not create the dominant ideology, so the revolutionary apparatuses of this working class (the party) do not create proletarian ideology; they rather elaborate and systematize it, by producing revolutionary theory" (Poulantzas, 1975, p. 31).

4) But he disagrees with Althusser about the "division" of apparatuses into economic, ideological, and repressive. On the one hand, all social institutions are ideological:

> As the unit of production in its capitalist form, an enterprise is also an apparatus, in the sense that, by means of the social division of labor within it (the despotic organization of labor) the enterprise itself reproduces political and ideological relations affecting the phases of the social classes. In other words, the reproduction of the all-important ideological relations is not the concern of the ideological apparatuses alone: just as not everything that goes on in "production" involves only the "economic," so the ideological apparatuses have no monopoly over reproducing the relations of ideological domination.
>
> ...this reproduction of the places of social classes do not just involve the ideological state apparatuses and the economic apparatus; it also involves the branches of the repressive state apparatus in the strict sense... If the branches of the capitalist state's repressive apparatuses intervene in the reproduction of the places in social classes, this is because, while their principal vote is that of repression, which is what distinguishes them from the ideological apparatuses, they are not limited to this; they have also an ideological role, generally secondary, just as the ideological apparatuses themselves also have a repressive role, which is generally secondary, (1978, p. 32).

So, all institutions are involved in the reproduction of the class structure and all have a multitude of functions. The separation of the ideological and repressive apparatuses, for Poulantzas, obscures the role that each plays. Schools, then, are not only an ideological apparatus but also a repressive one. And this is a key to understanding their functioning: it is not enough to say that the schools inculcate pupils with dominant ideology; the institution as such has repressive functions: by law, it can <u>force</u> students to behave in particular ways, to conform over to a predetermined behavior pattern, and it has

the periodical power to keep pupils in school, in other words it can keep them physically bound to be exposed to the ideological training it chooses to give them, this in cooperation with the State's repressive apparatuses.

On the other hand, Poulantzas argues that the State (with its ideological and repressive apparatuses) plays--in the latest phases of capitalist development--an increasingly important economic role. It is impossible to understand this economic role with an analytical framework which strictly differentiates the State apparatuses. Poulantzas views the State's economic role as a direct intervention to raise the level of surplus value and therefore of capitalist level of exploitation (1978, p. 195). It is an effort to counteract the falling rate or profit. And while there are specific apparatuses of the State which have this as their prinicpal function, representing different fractions of the dominant bourgeoisie (for example, many of the regulatory agencies directly controlled by the large corporations in that sector; the Commerce Department; the Small Business Administration; etc.), the ideological and repressive apparatuses themselves according to Poulantzas play crucial economic roles in the advanced monopoly stage of capitalist development. "Defense" has become a key element in the economy, with public expenditures on weaponry forming the base of entire production sectors. Thus, the repressive apparatus is at the same time a means to subsidize capital.

Education plays a similar role. First, besides contributing to the reproduction of class structure through the distribution of youth into the various functions of the labor force based on their educational qualifications and the reproduction of the relations through its ideological inculcation of bourgeois values (see Althusser), the educational apparatus

provides the technical skills and know-how necessary to the continued accumulation of capital. In other words, workers pay for the education of their children and part of the return to these expenditures goes to maintain the level of surplus value--to subsidize the rate of profit. So the schools not only distribute knowledge, they produce it.

> This displacement (from the extensive exploitation of labor force and extracting absolute surplus to the intensive exploitation of labor and the extraction of relative surplus) henceforth assigns to the State an essential role in the enlarged reproduction of the labor force, a reproduction in which the space is extended well beyond the process of qualifying that labor force, (1978, p. 195).

The production of knowledge is carried out not only in schools; it is produced by the State itself, through universities (public and private--the latter through government grants). The State plays an increasingly important role in guiding the direction of innovation by investing heavily in research and development--the space program, defense expenditures, grants to universities all contribute to a particular direction of innovation, one that contributes to the extraction of surplus value by private capital and therefore reproduces the class structure.

Furthermore, the educational apparatus itself is an important source of employment for special groups in the society. Gramsci discusses the place of rural intellectuals (PN, p. 14) and the relationship of the State Bureaucracy to the medium and small rural bourgeoisie (PN, p. 212). In advanced monopoly capitalism the teachers and administrators of the school system form part of the "new petty bourgeoisie" (Poulantzas, 1975, pp. 191-332), drawn from sections of the working class. The U.S. educational system has provided "upward mobility" for women and minority males (more than half of all women and minority men professionals in the U.S. are employed by the government, and most of those in local government, pri-

marily in the education system (see Carnoy, Girling, and Rumberger, 1975). The schools are therefore also employers and contribute--through that employment--to the sustainment of bourgeois ideology about the justice of capitalism.

5) As we have seen, Poulantzas views State apparatuses as not only on an equal footing with the production sector in terms of the importance of reproduction versus production (the contributions of Gramsci and Althusser), but he considers both the State and the productive base to be part of and shaped by class struggle. Thus, the educational system is not simply an instrument of the bourgeoisie as a means to effect its domination over other groups but is the result of struggle between dominant and dominated groups. This struggle in other apparatuses, notably the production sector, affects the school system just as that struggle shapes the State apparatuses in general. Furthermore, once the State, including the educational system, attempts to displace class conflict into the political arena, the educational process itself becomes part of the struggle. This struggle takes place between fractions of the dominant bourgeoisie, especially between those fractions who would like to see a greater expansion of the educational system for the training of more qualified labor and those who see such an expansion as a threat to bourgeois hegemony, but also between the working class and the dominant groups. Thus, Poulantzas' model portrays education as the result of conflict and engaged in it--as the result of contradictions and the source of new contradictions (for a further development of these views, see Levin and Carnoy, 1980, forthcoming). This analysis suggests a dynamic in the development of the educational system and its relation to other apparatuses which is missing both in Gramsci and Althusser.

III. Recent Empirical Studies of Education

Having reviewed Marxist theories of the State and what they imply for education, we can now turn to some specific recent analyses of education in two countries--France and the U.S.--and assess their contribution to our understanding of schooling. The first of these, Reproduction, by Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, is not a Marxian analysis. We should be quick to point that out. The other two, Baudelot and Establet's L'ecole capitaliste en France and Bowles and Ginits's Schooling in Capitalist America, are works in the Marxian tradition and fit into the theories we have presented above. The principal common feature of all three is that they see a State and a public educational system which serve the interest of a particular social class--a dominant group which is able, in some way, to amass more political power than other social groups. The perspectives also share, therefore, the concept of a class-structured school system. But this is where the similarity ends: each of the views we present here has a different concept of the dynamic of change in the forces which dominate schooling and work; to a large extent, in fact, the analyses presented are either not dynamic at all, or deal only partially with the forces shaping changes in institutions. In this sense, they have important shortcomings which a more complete model would have to address. In the last section of the essay this is exactly what we attempt to do: we propose a model of education in advanced capitalist societies (which could, however, be adapted either to dependent capitalism or to socialist societies) more in Poulantzas' view of the State and its relation to the base.

The French Institutional Functionalists

For Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), the principal function of schooling is to reproduce the hierarchical relations between different groups or classes in the society and to legitimize those relations. The raison d'etre of formal education is to reproduce the existing power relations--the domination of one group over others--from generation to generation without having to use violence. The principal means to achieve this reproduction is through the system of teaching, and the language used as the basis of communication in the schools--the dominant group's "cultural arbitrary:" a system of values, norms, and languages.

In addition, the schools impose a selection system based on examinations, and it is these examinations which--in the French system particularly--effectively separate dominant class children for promotion to higher grades while leaving children of the subordinate groups behind. In explaining the selection system (Why does the "working class" get selected out, but the children of the "higher class" continue on?), Bourdieu and Passeron stress the "cultural capital" that different social classes bring to the school. According to them, academic changes for the French pupil are already fixed in primary school. The system places children from different social classes into different academic situations, such that workers' children are systematically put at a disadvantage relative to children from higher classes. Social class not only determines how far pupils will go in school, but, the kind of work they will do and the life they will lead, especially their attitudes and values. But, according to them, social class is important only because it is reproduced in the structures of the school system: it is the basis of division in the schools, but is not itself the source of

adult values and attitudes.

In this model, then, it is apparatuses and institutions (particularly the educational system) which determine social groups (classes) with class relations arising from the situation of people (students) in institutional relations. Social classes themselves have no meaning except as they are certified and developed by some institution like the schools. As we shall see, this is a fundamentally different interpretation of the function of the schools from those models that see the apparatuses of the State (including schools) as reflecting a class struggle which arises in the production system and then becomes embodied in the institutions of the State themselves.

In delegating the power of selection to the school system, the privileged classes can appear to abdicate to a "neutral" institution the "power of transmitting, power from one generation to the other and thus to be renouncing the arbitrary privilege of the hereditary transmission of privileges" (p. 167). And, they argue, the school is in fact autonomous in some ways from the society as a whole (p. 167), but this autonomy is a facade for the reproduction of the social hierarchy:

Although they never make clear why the working class is so willing to accept the false meritocracy of the schools, two arguments are implicit in their analysis: 1) as the allocator of social roles, the school holds out scholastic success, no matter how limited for working class children, as the sole possibility of economic and social success (for example, p. 165); and 2) the operation of the school system is seen, in some broad sense, to serve the general welfare, largely through its stated goal of meeting manpower and cultural needs.

Bourdieu and Passeron's analysis provides us with a number of important insights into the education system and the process of teaching and selection, especially with regard to the "class" nature of that process. They suggest a different kind of understanding of the relationship between an idealized, meritocratic school and the reality of who gets to higher levels of schooling and into higher-paying jobs. Yet, there are--from the standpoint of the development of an alternative perspective on education and work--a number of difficulties with their analysis. First, it is mechanistic and deterministic: it is limited to showing how, through the school and largely through the school, each individual inherits the social class of his/her father. The school reproduces that which exists, and even though there may be school reforms, the reproductive function of the schools continues essentially unchanged. For example, before the French school reform of the 1960's, selection into higher levels of schooling took place with examinations at the end of primary school, with very few working class children entering the academic track of the lycee, and even fewer reaching the university. With the reform, according to Bourdieu and Passeron, selection became somewhat more subtle, since all children allegedly had equal opportunity for high school academic training for four years and were only selected for academic training (leading to the grands ecoles and universities) in the last three years of high school, but class and sex selection continued to be highly effective even after the reform (see also Levin, 1978).

Second, there is no discussion of the source of power relations. We learn that the "dominant group" is able to use the school system to reproduce its power. But where did the dominant group get its power in

the first place? The implication of the analysis is that the source of power is power itself: being dominant allows you to reproduce your dominance through the institutions of society that you control because you are dominant. It gives you control over knowledge, learning, attitudes and values. Neither does resistance to power by the subordinate classes have any base but resistance itself. Resistance is implicit only, appearing solely in the fact that the schools are accepted by the working class against its own "interest." This theory of relations between groups has repercussions for Bourdieu and Passeron's characterization of education: school is seen as part of increased domination with a reduction of physical violence--the internalization of repression and the substitution of symbolic for real violence. Consent of the working class to domination is assumed and explained by the pedagogic authority and autonomy of the schools. Nowhere is evidence presented that the working class has indeed accepted a class-based schooling or dominant class domination. Nor are other forms of repression--openly violent forms which complement the more ideological nature of the schools--discussed.

The first and second difficulties lead to the third: their analysis has no dynamic: we are left without an analysis of how the system changes. Reform occurs, but the operation of the school system is fundamentally the same. Why did the reform occur in the first place? Why the necessity to mystify the real power relations in society and the function of the schools? Is this necessity simply a function of dominant group need to reduce physical violence? Bourdieu and Passeron do make one attempt to give their model dynamic character: they argue that it is possible to look at the school selection system over time, noting that although

the level of schooling in a particular age group has been rising in France since the early sixties (as a result of the reform), the distribution of probability of reaching the highest levels of schooling for the different social classes remained the same. But neither the causes of reform, nor the internal dynamic of the schools is touched at all. By relying on the argument that the schools are relatively autonomous from other institutions of society, Bourdieu and Passeron lose the important interconnections of change and conflict which occur in the productive apparatus, in the political system, and in the schools.

A Marxian View of the French System

The assumption of power expressed through institutions--fundamental to the institutionalist-functionalist view--makes schooling itself a definer of the class structure. We have shown that the Marxian analysis rejects this assumption. Schools are not a "subject" of power; institutions themsleves are not considered the "creator" of class of hierarchical relations. The power structure is defined by the system of production, outside the school system; what education does reflects class relations inherent in the way commodities are produced. A Gramscian-Althusserian view of how education reflects these class relations is derived from Althusser's emphasis on reproduction through the ideological function of the schools; this emphasis, in turn, is based on Gramsci's work. It leads to a strategy of working class resistance to ideological domination in the schools while building a counter-ideology through other, non-school counter-hegemonic apparatuses, particularly the revolutionary party.

The Gramscian-Althusserian view of French education finds its clearest expression in the work of Charles Baudelot and Roger Establet (1971). While agreeing with much of what Bourdieu and Passeron say about education as a reproductive institution, Baudelot and Establet's interpretation differs on two essential points: 1) they describe French power relations in terms of their material base. Thus, they consider that one class dominates others and uses the school system to reproduce this relation of dominating-dominated, but the group or class which does this is not an abstraction in capitalist society, it is the bourgeoisie which dominates other groups and the bourgeoisie's power is rooted in their economic position as the owners of capital and controllers of investment. In this view, the school--which is outside the production system--is fundamental to the reproduction of capitalist's dominant position, primarily through the inculcation of dominant ideology. 2) They suggest, however, that working class pupils do not fully accept this attempt by the dominant class to impose its ideology; i.e., the working class does resist in the schools. This provides the beginning of a dynamic which is absent from Bourdieu and Passeron's work.

Using the Althusserian typology, they argue that in France, primary school is the principal place where the division into class-based tracks is achieved, and this for two purposes:

1) the division of labor--individuals are distributed into materially different social and economic positions; and 2) the inculcation of bourgeois ideology. Both these functions are accomplished simultaneously and constitute the same purpose of the school system. However, they contend that the functions are not carried out harmoniously at all; ideological imposition creates contradictions and struggles, primarily through resistance

by working class youth to an ideology which rejects proletarian values developed in other institutions (in France, leftist unions and political parties provide the basis of a counter ideology which is antithetical to school curriculum and teaching practices).

Contradictions occur because of the necessity of imposing the dominant ideology in two different and incompatible forms: one form is supposed to produce an uncomprehending proletariat which accepts bourgeois values and at the same time learns what is necessary for its participation in production; the other form creates the extenders and interpreters of the bourgeois ideology itself with a different body of knowledge for a different type of participation in production.

Unlike the institutional-functionalist view, this interpretation claims that the working class does not fully accept the school system in the face of apparent injustices. While the institutional-functionalists contend that the schools are able to gain acceptance because of their autonomy and pedagogical authority, Baudelot and Establet suggest that the schools may have autonomy, but physical coercion plays an important role in keeping pupils there (compulsory schooling, for example), and there is significant resistance to the dominant ideology. A certain amount of class consciousness exists in proletarian youth, they argue, but since the school is separated from production and the pupils are not subject to exploitation, the "effects of proletarian class consciousness occur in school in forms very different from those that they take in production" (p. 179). The resistance of working class pupils in school is not an economic resistance, then, but an ideological one--working class pupils perceive the imposition of the petit-bourgeois version of the dominant ideology as a "veritable provocation." These resistances are often violent, where the pupils attempt to deface and

destroy the school, insult professors, etc. But more often, they simply display behavior which interrupts the process of socialization, which disturbs the culture of the school (p. 186). According to Baudelot and Establet, the bourgeoisie must keep these individual and group resistances from burgeoning into a full-fledged transformation to a proletarian ideology--into a "fusion of the scientific conception of history and of the concrete experience of the class struggle" (p. 191).

Rather than speaking of institutional-functionalist inequalities in the school system, Gramscian-Althusserians like Baudelot and Establet argue that these are contradictions in the schools, "inevitable contradictions in the functioning of the school apparatus in which the existence of two types of schooling, camouflaged as the single school, is the evident proof. If the school apparatus had as its function to impose on the proletariat and on the bourgeoisie the same ideology, that couldn't take place, and is not in fact taking place, without struggles" (p. 312).

Yet, despite this dialectical element--the conflict between dominant and proletarian ideology in the schools--Baudelot and Establet do not establish any relationship between changes in the production system and changes in the education system, both of which should emanate from class conflict in their models. The lack of explanation leaves their treatment with distinct instrumentalist overtones: the education system is a direct instrument of the bourgeoisie, which uses schooling for its own ends, particularly imposing a dominant ideology and reproducing a division of labor which suits bourgeois needs. Baudelot and Establet's proposition that schools are a means to control the formation of a proletarian ideology can be valid only when the government is tightly and directly controlled

by the bourgeoisie.

Neither do they ever explain where contradiction in the schools leads; it is primarily a fixture of the system, produced by potential difficulties of attempting to impose the same ideology on all social classes. The best that could happen in such a model is that some portion of the proletariat resists the ideology imposed by the schools so that institutions producing a proletarian ideology can eventually establish what Gramsci called "proletarian hegemony"--the dominance of proletarian values and culture.

A Marxian View of the U.S. System

The best example to date of the Poulantzas version of structuralism is Bowles and Gintis' work on education in the United States (1976). They present a model which analyzes educational reform as a function of capitalist development--of changes in the production sector. Such changes in production--themselves a result of class conflict--determine the subsequent changes in the way schooling is called upon to reproduce the relations of production. Bowles and Gintis explicitly reject non-Marxist explanations of education's economic role in terms of "the mental skills it supplies students and for which employers pay in the labor market" (1976, p. 9). Rather, they argue that the relation between the economy and education must be traced through schooling's effect of "consciousness, interpersonal behavior, and personality it fosters and reinforces in students" (p. 9); therefore, any explanation of what schooling does depends on understanding the economy. Understanding the economy means--in the United States--understanding the essential elements of capitalism. And understanding

means dealing with the social process of extracting surplus from workers, and the "inherently antagonistic and always potentially explosive" process that it requires.

Based on this view of the economic system, they outline five important implications of their analysis: 1) Economic inequality and personal development are "defined primarily by the market, property, and power relationships which define the capitalist system." Changes in inequality and development occur almost exclusively "through the normal process of captial accumulation and economic growth and through shifts in the power among groups engaged in economic activity" (p. 11). 2) The educational system is not an independent force in changing inequality or the nature of personal development. It is, in their terms "an institution which serves to perpetuate the social relations of economic life through which these patterns are set, by facilitating a smooth integration of youth into the labor force" (p. 11). The system does this by legitimating inequality, allocating students to distinct positions in the economic hierarchy, reinforcing patterns of class, race and sex, fostering personal development which is compatible with the position of each student in the dominating/dominated subordinary relationships in production, and creating surpluses of skilled labor to put downward pressure on wages. 3) The educational system does not achieve these goals through the conscious intentions of teachers and administrators, but through the "close correspondence between the social relations which govern close interaction in the work place and the social relations of the educational system" (p. 12). 4) While the school system corresponds to the social relations in the work place and serves "the interests of profit and

stability," it does not achieve this perfectly--it also develops some "politicized egalitarian consciousness," and some misfits and rebels. This happens because the "imperatives of profit often pull the school system in opposite directions," and because "contrary forces external to the school system continually impinge on its operations" (p. 12).
5) The correspondence between school structure and job structure has "taken distinct and characteristic forms in different periods of U.S. history, and has evolved in response to political and economic struggles associated with the process of capital accumulation, the extension of the wage-labor system, and the transition from an entrepreneurial to a corporate economy" (p. 13).

The model of education contained in these implications is thus very close to Poulantzas' view of capitalist State apparatuses: the education system reflects the relations in production (the inherent class relations) and acts to support (reproduce) them. This is an important function of the State and it is important in the overall understanding of how capitalism works. As captialism changes, the role of the schools changes as well. Moreover, the school does not act perfectly to achieve this reproduction--as a State apparatus, it is also marked by contradiction and conflict.

Bowles and Gintis' empirical work and subsequent analysis, however, accentuates certain of these relationships and not others. Despite their detailed and insightful explanations of the role of schooling in American society, they grant very little autonomy to the educational system in that overall analysis, nor do they provide us with much understanding of the contradictions and the nature of the class struggle in the educational (superstructural) apparatus, nor of the eventual effect that struggle has

on relations in production and the capital accumulation process, especially as education becomes an increasingly important mediator of contradictions in production and the capital accumulation process, especially as education becomes an increasingly important mediator of contradictions in production. Rather, the accent is put on the role of education in mediating class conflict in production: U.S. educational history is developed in terms of a dominant fraction of the ruling class using the educational system creatively to mediate class struggle in the economy.

There are three principal implications of their interpretation. First, the all important point that the dominant group in the ruling class turned and turns to superstructure to attenuate conflict in the base (supporting Althusser's view), but that the class conflict in the superstructure is not particularly successful in influencing the shape of the educational system--neither its organization nor its content:

> The evolution of U.S. education over the last century and a half was the result of a compromise--granted an unequal one--between the capitalist class and the very social classes it had unintentionally but nonetheless inexorably created. Though the business interests often struck their compromise under severe duress, and--as we have seen in numerous cases--did not always prevail, they were highly successful in maintaining ultimate control over the administration of educational reform. Working people got more schooling, but the form and content of the schooling was more often than not effectively out of their hands (p. 240).

Second, Bowles and Gintis put primary emphasis on the reproductive function of the schools in all the different stages of U.S. capitalist development. Reproduction is defined in the Althusserian sense: the reproduction of labor power--the allocation of skilled labor to different parts of the hierarchy based on pupil worker's social class backgound--and the reproduction of the relations of production. Thus, the reproduction

of economic inequality and the legitimation of that inequality (as well as the legitimation of capitalist relations in production) receive top billing in the role that education plays. This does not mean that they ignore schools' function to enhance labor power in general and to produce innovation--to increase the skill level of workers and the productivity of capital as a means of maintaining capital accumulation, but they do accent the ideological repressive over the economic functions of schooling. To some extent, this changes in their analysis of university education and reform in the most recent stage of capitalist development (pp. 201-223), as we should expect, given the apparently higher level of skill content in higher levels of schooling and the role of universities in producing knowledge. Furthermore, the role of schools as employers, particularly as employers of minority and woman professionals with all the implications for the social mobility myth inherent in that role, is not discussed. Therefore, the economic-ideological function of the schools is generally less important than the ideological-repressive, even in the later stages of capitalist development.

Third, Bowles and Gintis do much better in analyzing the correspondence of the economic sector (structure) and the education system (superstructure) than in analyzing contradictions in the superstructure and its implications for the base. The principal purpose of their work, indeed, is to show the close connection between changes in the economy and changes in education, to focus on the close relation between changes in capitalist relations in production and educational reform. Their analysis of educational alternatives proposed in the 1960's as possible ways of humanizing education or making it less unequal therefore concentrates on

showing that none of these alternatives can achieve more than marginal improvement in the face of an unchanged economic system.

> Many of the reforms discussed in this chapter are feasible within the context of present day U.S. society...All would, with hard work, have the effect of improving, to some degree, the future lives and present comforts of our youth. As such they are desirable indeed. However, we have argued that none, within its own framework, is capable of addressing the major problems facing U.S. society today...Only revolutionary reforms have this potential...The notion that the U.S. school system does--or ever can, under capitalism--effectively serve the interests of equality or human growth is going by the boards (pp. 262-263).

It is at this last point that their analysis departs most from the work of Poulantzas or even Gramsci. For if the contradictions in superstructure are essential to understanding capitalist crises; that is, if the State and its apparatuses are also subject to class struggle, then struggle in the schools can serve directly the process of change, and it is even possible to conceive that the schools in a capitalist society could become largely disfunctional to capitalist reproduction. The point is that Bowles and Gintis' analysis does not discuss this possibility, even though--in theory--their model allows for it. Because of their emphasis on the close ties between capitalist production relations and school reform (in its extreme form an instrumentalist view), they lose sight of the possibility that superstructure may gain in the process an autonomy which allows it to become a focus of revolutionary struggle. This could have implications for production itself, or at least for the struggle in the production sector. In a Gramscian analysis, this possibility would focus on the crisis of hegemony and the development of a counter-hegemony, particularly action in the schools which would tend

to produce more working class organic intellectuals (raise consciousness among working class youth in the schools). In a Poulantzas' view, increased control of the schools by working class parents and youth within the context of a capitalist economy and petit-bourgeois consciousness, might allow for the increased development of alternatives which are contrary to captialist interests, even though the State as a whole and the production structure would not be in a similar phase of conflict. Ultimately, then, Bowles and Gintis seem to reject the Poulantzas view that struggle within the State apparatuses can be a useful move in the overall class struggle—at least they reject the possibility that the State or any of its apparatuses <u>can</u> be used for radical reform in the face of capitalist control of production. A broader interpretation of their work would argue that it is much less fruitful to struggle in the ideological apparatus than in the base itself. In either case, schools as a place of conflict seem to have much less importance in their analysis than schools as <u>mediators</u>, and this reduces the potential for them as points of raising consciousness and accentuating conflicts in the rest of the society.

IV. A New Interpretation

Baudelot/Establet and Bowles/Gintis have argued (correctly, we think) that the dominant bourgeoisie in capitalist societies tries to use schooling--along with other superstructural institutions (Gramsci's notion of bourgeois hegemony)--to mediate contradictions in production; i.e., to reproduce (in Althusser's terms) the social class-based division of labor and to reproduce the relations in production.

Both works are important analyses of education in advanced capitalist societies. However, in light of Poulantzas' past and most recent contributions--the concept of class struggle displaced from the base into the superstructure (1973) and the relationship between class conflict-created contradictions in the superstructure and the ever-present struggle in the base (1978)--we feel that the Baudelot and Establet and Bowles and Gintis analyses lack three important elements:

1. Neither Baudelot/Establet nor Bowles/Gintis provides an adequate understanding of the process of contradiction and change in production and its relation to contradiction and change in education. As we have suggested, the French study emphasizes contradictions in the educational system without relating change in production to changes in the educational system (nor, by the way, the relation between contradictions in education and their effect on the base). Bowles and Gintis, on the other hand, develop an excellent analysis of educational change and its relation to production, but essentially provide no analysis of contradictions in the superstructure (State/education) and its relationship to class struggle in the base.

2. The Gramscian and Althusserian influence has successfully separated the base (production) from social reproduction, and the ideo-

logical aspects of reproduction from its repressive aspects. Poulantzas argues (and we agree) that these divisions are artifical and incorrect. An important part of reproduction takes place in the base itself (Marx's analysis)--perhaps the most important part: the reserve army of unemployed, fear of unemployment, the reward structure, Taylorism and piece work, and the very success of capitalist accumulation in the advanced industrial countries to raise workers' living standard over a long period of history, all are real features of capitalist reproduction that are indeed ideological and repressive, but are not per se part of the ideological or repressive apparatuses of the State.

3. Baudelot/Establet and Bowles/Gintis, in this Althusserian tradition, but primary emphasis on reproduction through the ideological apparatus of the State (hence the "ideological" role of the educational system). The economic functions of the State in advanced capitalist economies, analyzed by Poulantzas in his most recent works (1975 and 1978) and by O'Connor in the U.S. (1974) are disregarded, and therefore, so are the economic functions of the educational system. While these functions have fundamental ideological content, it is also critical to an analysis of the educational system to separate them out: as Lenin suggested, on the one hand, elements of schooling may be important to the capital accumulation process (even in a post-capitalist society) and thus also important to reproduction; and, as Poulantzas argued on the other, economic functions of schooling are a source of contradictions which work their way back into the base.

Our model of education (Levin and Carnoy, forthcoming, 1980) begins with contradictions arising from class struggle in the base. These are inherent contradictions: under capitalism the return to capital must come

from labor, and labor neither owns capital nor controls its investment and deployment. Bowles and Gintis have dealt with this point at length in their study, so there is no reason to review it again here. Struggle in the base leads to attempts by capitalists to "mediate" that struggle, and one of the ways that mediation takes place is through the public educational system, as our previous review of education and theories of the State makes clear.

Before going on to spell out the specific manner in which education carries out this mediating function and the contradictions which arise out of that process of mediation there are two critical points to be made:

1. Captialists attempt to deal with contradictions in the base primarily in a direct manner. That is, contrary to the stress put by Althusser on the ideological reproduction of labor power and the relations of production through the State apparatuses, we cannot forget that capitalist relations in production are reproduced in the base itself by three principal means: a) a reserve army of unemployed, created in various ways, which produces fear among workers of losing their jobs, and thus slows down or prevents organizing into unions, increasing productivity and keeps downward pressure on wages; b) Taylorism, speed up, and segmentation of labor markets, which attempt to increase productivity and control workers' use of time, and divides workers against each other; and c) the favorable accumulation of capital and the resultant increase of average wages.

Reproduction, therefore is still handled largely within the base itself: workers continue to work in the alienating conditions of capitalist production not only because they are taught to "believe" in the

capitalist system and to accept their role in it ("socialization" or the creation of "false consciousness") but because a) they are afraid of the consequences of struggle against capitalists/managers; b) the salary structure is such to punish those who don't conform and reward highly those who do; and c) the capitalist system has been successful, at least in the industrialized West, in raising workers' standard of living over a long period of time (on this last point see Przeworski, 1979).

Workers' choice is therefore not between an increasingly exploitative capitalism, steadily impoverishing workers or at best not letting them rise out of the chains of their poverty, and a nirvanic socialism. Rather, the more realistic choice, even in the nineteenth century U.S., was between a capitalism in which real wages were rising, and an unknown ideal. Today, the nature of socialist regimes (albeit in countries starting out at much lower levels of economic development and generally totally different political histories than those of the industrialized West) are not very attractive even for most industrial workers, not to speak of other types of employees.

2. Crisis in production--economic crisis--should not be downplayed in the overall dynamic of change. Gramsci's influence has been precisely to shift attention from economic crisis to crisis of hegemony, but in our view, this shift can be carried too far, despite the emphasis we will place here on contradictions in the superstructure. It is one thing to come to an understanding of the role of education in the process of reproduction and the contradictions in that process, and another to claim that education plays a <u>primary</u> role in reproduction (Althusser) or that

contradictions in superstructure (including education) are much more fundamental to the process of change than contradictions in the base (interpretations of Gramsci, Althusser). One of the greatest victories of capitalism in the industrialized countries was to get workers to accept economic crisis as part of the development process. But this acceptance was not necessarily the result of ideological dominance, but rather of the consistently successful resolution of such crises with a subsequent period of economic growth and rising wages. Workers came to believe that crises would be followed by boom--by resolution--that things would get better, and that over the long run, things would get steadily better. If they stop getting better for a significant period of time, belief in the system will erode.

The most important change we observe in industrial capitalist societies over the last fifty years is the increasing role of the State in ensuring that crises will be less deep and will be resolved. As Poulantzas' analysis explains, this is the result of class struggle: workers compelled the State to reduce the injustices of capitalist development, just as capitalists attempted to turn these interventions to their advantage, themselves pushing for direct State support for capitalist expansion. Again, state intervention in a reproductive role through the capital accumulation process (as well as its productive role) is important and cannot be ignored. In contributing directly to smoother capital accumulation through economic intervention, the State contributes to increased faith in the system to deliver the goods. The better capitalism actually works, the less likely workers are to overthrow it in favor of some other system. This is not a direct ideological intervention,

but an economic intervention with ideological roots.

A model of education that does not account for the importance of reproduction in the base itself misses an important function of the role of education as it relates to both means of reproduction within the base--the reserve army and the favorable accumulation of capital. In this context, we can describe the functions of education as not only ideological (in Althusser's terms, the reproduction of labor--the division of labor along class lines--and the reproduction of the relations of production through the ideological relations in the schools) but economic-reproductive: the contribution of education to developing a reserve army of skilled unemployed and its contribution to increased productivity, both directly and through the production of technocratic cadres willing and able to control other fractions of the labor force. In addition, education operates as part of the repressive apparatus of the State: children are required to attend school until age sixteen and if they "misbehave" in school, they are sanctioned, if not physcially, then with continuous harrassment of other kinds.

Education therefore functions as part of the productive and reproductive mechanisms of society at various levels: 1) It produces skills which contribute, particularly in advanced capitalist societies, to the accumulation of capital. Skill production not only contributes to production largely at the expense of the working class itself (workers pay taxes which pay for the schools, and often less well-off workers subsidize the children of higher income employees to attend university--see Hanson and Weisbrod, 1971) but, as we have argued, contributes to important reproductive mechanisms within the base by providing a reserve army of highly skilled cadres, creating fear of unemployment on lower status jobs among those cadres

already working, and by increasing the possibilities of generating surplus and hence maintaining faith in the growth capacity of the system. The educational system is also an important employer of highly educated professional, particularly the highly educated who have difficulty finding professional level employment in the private sector--minority men and women, women in general, and lower social class men in general. Thus, the educational system helps reproduce the relations in production by providing (along with the rest of the State bureaucracy) social mobility for those groups least likely to achieve it through the private sector. 2) As Althusser, Baudelot, Establet, and Bowles and Gintis have shown persuasively, education reproduces the distribution of skill along class lines--reproduces inequality--and reproduces the relations in production by socializing youth into a class structured, unequal and inequitable production system, and inculcates them with an ideology which displaces class conflict into certain channels--voting and consumerism--defines knowledge in particular ways, convinces youth that failure and success is each individual's responsibility, and generally separates each individual from every other individual. The ideology promulgated in the schools does include a reverence for bourgeois democracy, individual rights, and human rights which, in one sense, serves the capitalist class, but, as we shall see, also contains important contraindications for continued capitalist development. 3) Education is also repressive, as we have mentioned. Children must attend school--it is not voluntary. Those children who do not behave while in school are usually not punished physically, but are subject to some kind of repressive action, even calling the police to school. Furthermore, employers require school certificates for employment.

Public education is thus part of the State effort to support the mediation of contradictions within the base. Education attempts to support direct mediation (the formation of skills to increase the supply of skilled workers (reserve army of unemployed), particularly professional cadres. Such mediation contributes to the accumulation of capital, helping capitalist development to be more successful than it might otherwise be. Education is also part of the State attempt to reproduce the class division of labor (inequality) and to reproduce the relations of production (capitalist/managers as controllers of the investment and its deployment, workers as powerless wage labor) by socializing youth into wage labor and into accepting their lot as dictated by the schooling meritocracy (some succeeding in the struggle for social mobility, most not), a lot which the school claims is fairly and equitably determined, and by inculcating youth with a profound belief in the perfection and justice of bourgeois democracy. Finally, education is repressive and part of the repressive State apparatus, although this is not its main function.

It is impossible to separate these functions into clear distinct categories since they operate together. The characteristics of each function are colored by the existence of the others. For example, the formation of skills cannot be distinguished from the socialization of different social class youth into different kinds of jobs. The role of the school system as an employer (a form of direct mediation) cannot be separated from its role as reproducer of the class division of labor or as reproducer of the class relations of production: government employment serves, among other things, to incorporate minority and women professionals into positions not available in the private sector, thus helping to support the

myth that social mobility exists and that capitalist development (and the bourgeoisie) are universal incorporators.

But this process of mediation is rife with contradictions. Before discussing them, we should say something about contradictions themselves. Contradictions, in our model, do not occur between the superstructure (education) and the base (as mentioned in Poulantzas, 1975, and Bowles and Gintis, 1977). Contradictions develop in the base out of the inherent necessity of capitalist production to extract surplus from labor and of the capitalist class to control investment (capital), leaving workers out of the control process, separating them from their product, taking away their right to work, and forcing them into a consumer fetishism. Attempts are made by capitalists/managers, both directly through their "private" hegemonic apparatus and through the State, to mediate these contradictions. The mediation process itself, however, generates contradictions. These are not contradictions between the mediation process and the base. How, indeed, could a process which emerges as an attempt to mediate contradictions in the base be contradictory to the base? This is an incorrect formulation of the dialectic. The contradictions generated by the attempt to mediate are contradictions in the superstructure, since the superstructure is in and of itself the mediation process. And contradictions in the superstructure influence reproduction of capitalist relations, since the mediation process is important to that reproduction. Of course, contradictions in the base continue to occur even while contradictions in the superstructure also exist. Crisis in production and crisis of hegemony are intertwined, and as Poulantzas shows, part and parcel of the same overall class struggle.

Furthermore, before discussing contradictions in the superstructure we should say something about the capability of the base and the super-

structure to deliver a reality acceptable to the mass of workers. While Marxian literature concentrates on the inherent contradictions of capitalism, we also have to acknowledge that advanced capitalist societies, to one degree or another, are capable of compromising with worker demands: the standard of living of the mass of workers in the U.S., for example, has risen by fifty percent since World War II, economic crises have been short, and unemployment, while pervasive, has been restricted (over long periods) to youth and minorities. The political systems of advanced capitalist countries have also allowed considerable democracy: while bourgeois hegemony in these countries has certainly held down the percentage of the vote received by working-class parties, the fact is that in many capitalist countries, working class parties have done well politically, and in some cases, like Sweden, this success has led to considerable advancement of workers' economic rights. We are not suggesting that capitalism is slowly evolving into socialism. To the contrary, the point is that capitalists in certain countries have only been able to maintain their control over the means of production (avoiding a revolutionary situation) by yielding considerable ground in the class struggle: workers have won higher wages, a high degree of political participation and "potential" access to power.

Keeping all this in mind, what are the contradictions particular to the mediation function of the schools? In our model, we identify two principal contradictions. (Much of the following has been developed in close collaboration with Henry Levin. See particularly Levin's "Economic Democracy, Education and Social Change," presented at the Fifth Vermont Conference on the Primary Prevention of Psychopathology, University of Vermont, June 19-23, 1979.)

1. The schools are called upon to increase the number of skilled cadres and managers available to employers. At the same time employers tend to displace less highly schooled older workers with highly schooled newer ones. In conjunction with these types of mediations and the direct effect they have on the productivity-earnings spread, schools also promote youth to take more schooling in conjunction with the social mobility ideology: the only way to succeed in a "meritocracy" is to get as much schooling as you can. Workers also demand more schooling for their children because they believe (correctly, to some extend) that more schooling means more economic opportunity for their children. All of this has served to increase rapidly the average level of schooling in the labor force of advanced industrial (and also low-income) countries. The contradiction emerging from this rapid growth is the "over-education" of workers for the kinds of jobs available to the large majority. In the U.S., for example, average schooling relative to job requirements increased rapidly between 1965 and 1975 (Rumberger, 1978). The greatest increase occurred in the most menial jobs.

As long as the economic system expanded in the aggregate and moved from agriculture to production to the services, there was an expansion of the occupational structure at the levels that could absorb a more and more educated labor force. At each level of education it was possible for workers to view a set of occupational prospects and earnings that was better than the prospects for less-educated persons. And, in general, those with college educations were able to achieve technical, managerial, and professional positions while those with less education had to settle for lower earnings and less-prestigious careers. Thus, the training and

socialization provided by the schools at each level also seemed to dovetail relatively well with the eventual demands of the workplace at the appropriate occupational level.

In recent years, though, the rate of economic growth has diminished at a time when there is an unusually large number of persons of college age and when a very high proportion of those entering the labor force have obtained at least some college-level training. The reduction in the rate of economic expansion and the maturation of the structure of the economy have resulted in an inability of the economy to absorb the increase in the number of persons with college training (Freeman, 1976; Rumberger, 1978). Instead, it appears that young persons with college training will have to accept increasingly those jobs which were filled traditionally by persons with much lower educational attainments.

What is evident is that the same incentives that stimulated the expansion of enrollments in the schools for socializing a growing labor force for capitalist and government production will continue to operate even when the opportunities to employ more educated persons do not expand at a commensurate rate. The so-called private returns on educational investment depend not only on the earnings for the additional education, but also on the earnings that would be received without further education. Even if the earnings for college graduates grow slowly over time or decline when adjusted for rises in the price level, a college education may still represent a very good investment if the opportunities for high school graduates decline at an even greater rate (Grasso, 1977).

Further, education represents one of the few hopes for social mobility from generation-to-generation for most families and individuals, so as the ideology of educational attainment continues to persist, the quest for

more education as an instrument of status attainment will also persist. Both the existence of an ideology of education as a path of social mobility as well as the fact that even with declining opportunities for college graduates there is an even greater deterioration for high school graduates lead to the following conclusion. The educational system will continue to turn out more and more educated persons regardless of the inability of the economy to absorb them.

On the economic side, there is little on the horizon that suggests that the long run prospects for economic growth will improve much. First, problems of high energy costs and rising costs of other natural resources run counter to technologies that have been predicated on cheap and unlimited energy and other natural resources. Second, to a large degree the government cannot use either fiscal or monetary policy to increase the economic growth rate without triggering various shortages, bottlenecks in production and price increases in markets that are dominated by the monopolistic elements that characterize the economic system. Third, the costs of labor and the stability of production in many of the third world countries promises much greater profits than further investment in the U.S.

To further aggravate the situation, many existing jobs are being transformed by technology and capital investment into ones that are becoming more and more routinized and devoid of the need for human judgements and talents. Studies of automation have suggested that the critical skills and judgements that are associated with particular jobs are eliminated by greater use of technology and capital (Braverman, 1974). Even many traditional professions have become increasingly proletarianized in this way as the expansion of professional opportunities has shifted from self-employment to corporate and government employment. Under the latter

forms of organization, the professional is given a much more specialized and routing function, rather than choosing for himself or herself the types of clients, practices, hours, and work methods that will be employed.

Thus, not only do the alternatives for the educated person seem to be deteriorating in both quality and quantity, but an analysis for the longer run suggests that the forces that are creating this deterioration will continue to prevail. Thus, young and educated persons are likely to find themselves in situations where their expectation and skills exceed those which are associated with available jobs. Since most jobs will not have the intrinsic characteristics that would keep such persons engaged, the inadequate nature of the extrinsic rewards will operate to make it more and more difficult to integrate such persons into the labor force. That is, the lack of opportunities for promotion and the limited wage gains in conjunction with the relatively routinized nature of most jobs will tend to create a relatively unstable work force. It is also important to note that the availability of the public assistance in the form of food stamps, medical care, and other services as well as unemployment insurance tends to cushion the impact of losing employment, so the negative impact of losing or quitting one's job is no longer as powerful a sanction for job conformance.

2. The schools, as an important part of the State's ideological apparatus, must inculcate youth with the sense that they live in a political democracy, and that the economic system is fair and just. On the one hand, we could argue that the schools, in themselves inherently and obviously not democratic, make clear to youth that the democracy discussed in history and civics classes is an abstraction, so much so that they come to accept the abstract nature of democracy in their post-school, everyday

lives (by neither voting nor otherwise participating in the polictical system). This symbolism of democracy is precisely what the bourgeoisie strives to promote. On the other hand, even symbolism creates danger for bourgeois hegemony, both for reproduction of the relations of production and for the State. Inculcating students with democratic ideals, even if discussing the historic role of the working class in forcing those ideals into a practicing universal suffrage is avoided, does promote an ideology of individual and human rights. This mass ideology can be and is directed against big business as well as big government, can be and is directed against a State which is overly repressive or attempts to make foreign wars in the name of protecting a country's imperial "options," can be and is directed against oppressive hierarchies in enterprises.

In addition to these two principal contradictions, inherent in the role schools must play in the mediation process is the need to legitimize schools as reproducers of labor (this is the point raised by Bourdieu and Passeron.) This necessity of legitimacy gives the schools a formal autonomy from the base and the private hegemonic apparatuses, and autonomy (in theory) allows teachers, administrators, and students to follow independent educational strategies which are not consistent with the mediation functions required for softening contradictions in the base. Furthermore, the very bringing together of large numbers of youth in the same insitution promotes the development of youth culture which may be inconsistent with social reproduction.

The importance of these contradictions in interfering with the reproductive process is not altogether clear. We do know that workers with schooling greater than that required to perform their jobs are less likely

to be satisfied in those jobs, and would therefore tend to be less productive (HEW, 1973). Workers who are anti-authoritarian in hierarchical organizations are also likely to be less productive. Productivity is an increasing problem for capitalist expansion in the advanced economies. The dissatisfactions that result from frustrated expectations with respect to the quality of work and its extrinsic rewards can create threats to productivity in a variety of ways. Most notable among these are rising absenteeism, worker turnover, wildcat strikes, alcoholism and drug usage, and deterioration of product quality. Even rising incidences of sabotage are possible responses by young workers who feel that they are overeducated for the opportunities that have been made available to them and who do not see the possibilities of major improvements in their situations. But employers have other ways to deal with these problems, particularly by disciplining the labor force directly (recessions, increasing immigration, bringing increased numbers of women into the labor force, runaway Shops, repression on the job, or even allowing a limited amount of worker control in the work process). Whether these ways can work, over the long run, to increase productivity or decrease wages relative to productivity remains to be seen.

The overproduction of educated persons relative to available opportunities is not only creating disruptive potential for the workplace, it is also suggesting difficulties for the educational system as well. As the exchange value of a college degree and high school diploma have fallen, there are a number of indications of a relaxation of educational standards. For example, there is considerable evidence that average grades have risen at the same time that standardized test scores in basic

skill areas have fallen (Wirtz et al., 1977).

While there are many possible causes for these phenomena, one of the most intriguing is that these are natural responses to the falling commodity value of education. Thus, the educational system seems to be providing higher grades for relatively poorer quality work, and students no longer seem willing to put in the effort to acquire the various cognitive skills. This explanation fits our overall framework in that to a large degree existing educational activities will be undertaken for their extrinsic values rather than for their intrinsic worthwhileness. As the extrinsic value of education falls in the marketplace, the grades given for any level of effort must rise to ensure a given performance. Moreover, the effort that a student will put in to acquiring an education will also decline as the financial and prestige rewards decline.

A further example of this type of disruptive potential of the schools is reflected in the increasing problem of discipline. To a large degree, the discipline of workers is maintained through the promise of good pay, steady work, and possible promotion for those who conform. Since the work is intrinscially without value to the worker, it is these incentives that must be used to ensure appropriate working behavior. A similar situation has existed in the school, where the fear of failure and of low grades and the attractions of promotion and high grades has helped to maintain discipline among students. These systems of extrinsic rewards have served to ensure that students see it in their best interests to "follow the rules". But, as the job situation and possibilities of social success from education have deteriorated, even the grading system is no longer adequate to hold students in check. In fact, recent Gallup Polls of

problems in the schools are consistent in implicating discipline as the most important difficulty (Gallup, 1977).

Contradictions in the educational system do decrease the mediating potential of schools. Schools are mediators because of the class struggle in production, but in being mediators, themselves become part of the class struggle. As long as the capitalist system is functioning smoothly, increasing the masses' standard of living at an acceptable and steady rate and providing charismatic and effective leaders who are able to give the masses a participatory feeling--a sense of "progress," these contradictions may be "latent." But in economic crisis and crisis of hegemony, they manifest themselves in the directions we have suggested. They contribute to these crises, particularly in the sense that the schools turn out to be much less effective mediators of contradictions in the base than supposed.

In such cases, the power bloc attempts--through school reforms--to bring schools "back into line" as more effective mediators of contradictions in the base. The bloc will also take measures to mediate contradictions directly, as we have already mentioned, in the base itself, through action against labor. Yet, how much action it can take may be constrained by the contradictions emerging from the superstructure--from the crisis of hegemony--of which the schools are a part.

Our analysis therefore differs from previous Marxian approaches: we suggest that action in the superstructure--in the schools-- which exacerbates contradictions inherent in the educational system's mediating function can serve to exacerbate contradictions in the base, or at the least constrain the types of direct action available to the power bloc to take against labor in the base itself. In our model, actions in the schools have the potential to contribute positively to labor's position in the class

struggle by dint of the organic relation between struggle in superstructure and struggle in the base.

Thus, there exists a constellation of relations between the schools and the workplace that can provide either reinforcement or disruptive potential. While historically the operations of schools cannot be understood without an examination of their correspondence with the requirements of the capitalist workplace, the independent dynamic of schools and their internal contradictions also represent forces for challenging the institutions of the workplace. The result of these forces is that it is becoming more and more difficult to integrate students into either school life or working life than it has in the past. And the disruptive aspects of this situation are stimulating various responses in both the educational and work setting.

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